Top Agent Is Fired Over Paris Bugging

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PARIS, March 27—The government fired the head of France's counter-espionage agancy today in unofficial acknowledgement that his men were involved in the abortive December bugging of Le Cunard Enchaine, the satirical weekly.

Henri Biard, chief of the Direction de la Surveillance du Territore, was kicked upstairs to a largely honorific post in a major administrative shakeup involving 26 posts.

Another important victim in the changes, announced after the weekly cabinet session, was Eugene Camata, who lost his job as head of the political police.

Although no official comment accompanied the changes, recommended by new Interior Minister Jacques Chirac, the message was clear.

Critics of Biard's handling of the Canard case accused him of delaying judicial investigation.

Le Canard Enchaine—its title literally means "chained duck," but "gagged newspabest to keep up transatlantic bect to keep up transatlantic comparisons. It headlined its original story "Quelle Watergaffe," a typical Canard pun—"what a watergoof."

Week after week, Canard embarrased the counter-espionage agency by naming agents involved in the clandestine bugging effort, which Prime Minister Pierre Messmer originally tried to laugh off as a "practical jike."

Biard's refusal to allow the agents to appear before the enquiring magistrate was criticized as a violation of the French legal code.

It was argued that the agency's immunity in no way excused its agents from giving testimony to the magistrate, who was bound to secrecy during his investigation.

Biard and Camata, whose political police were also indirectly linked to the Canard case, were considered safe under former Intrior Minister Raymond Marcellin, a tough, self-styled "first cop of France" who headed the ministry for a record six years. Marcellin switched jobs with Chirac and became agricultute minister in the new Messmer government formed last month.

Chirac has made a conscious effort to reduce the number of city police, gendarmes and riot police present at demonstrations or simply stationed at major Paris street corners.

The change reflects Chirac's belief that his job should deal less with "law and order" and more with politics.